

**MEETING 09/01/2014**

**Ref: 11808**

**ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Older Londoners**

**Westminster Arts**

**Amount requested: £72,000**

**Amount recommended: £72,000**

**Adv: Tim Wilson**

**Base: Westminster**

**Benefit: Westminster,  
Hammersmith & City,  
Kensington & Chelsea.**

**Purpose of grant request:** To develop Resonate, our varied multi-setting arts programme for people living with dementia and mental health issues and their carers.

**Background**

Westminster Arts (WA) promotes improved health and wellbeing through arts and creative learning activities. In 2008 the charity was commissioned by NHS Westminster to develop a new service, Resonate, to help people with dementia live as independently as possible for as long as possible.

Dementia is an umbrella term describing a range of neurological conditions affecting memory, mood and comprehension. It is a progressive and degenerative disease for which there is currently no cure. 700,000 – 800,000 people in the UK have a type of dementia, 1,700 of whom live in the City of Westminster. As London's population ages, dementia is becoming more commonplace, and NHS Westminster forecasts the number of dementia patients in its own borough will rise to 2,600 by 2050.

Arts activities have been shown to help slow down the progress of some forms of dementia, and to improve the quality of life for people with the condition. WA developed Resonate for patients at all stages of the disease, and in a variety of residential settings. The programme was prepared in collaboration with public health professionals and developed in support of the National Dementia Strategy. As well as working with people experiencing dementia, WA also offers a number of complementary services for their families and carers.

**Funding History**

You have not previously funded Westminster Arts. WA withdrew an application in 2012 in order to update its charitable objects and strategic plan. This process is now complete, and the current application reflects the charity's new focus.

## **Current Application**

WA seeks your support to expand its Resonate programme within Westminster and into neighbouring Kensington & Chelsea, and Hammersmith & Fulham. The charity's proposed tri-borough approach has been designed to correspond with changes in NHS commissioning which, in this area of London, is no longer at the individual borough level.

WA aims to support 320 people each year through activities in community centres, residential care settings, and domestic homes. Beneficiaries will continue to be identified through WA's connections with Community Mental Health Teams and Housing Associations, as well as through a formative GP network who the charity is engaging via its new Arts on Prescription project.

As a result of the condition, most beneficiaries will be in their late 70s or older, but the charity would also like to offer its services to those in their 60s who are affected by early onset dementia. Carers, many of whom will be older people themselves, will also be able to participate in the programme and WA aims to provide these beneficiaries with opportunities to learn practical skills that help manage the care of the patient.

## **Financial Observations**

Independently examined accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 show an overall deficit of £29,073 (36%), comprising a deficit of £50,116 on unrestricted funds partially offset by a surplus of £21,043 on restricted funds. The unrestricted deficit arose from a substantial fall in unrestricted income, a consequence of the decision by Westminster City Council, previously the charity's largest donor, to discontinue all arts funding across the borough. As a result, WA made its Director redundant, leaving it with limited fundraising capacity.

The charity's reserves policy is to hold sufficient funds to cover redundancy and all wind up costs should such an eventuality be reached, which the organisation has calculated as £5,500 (equivalent to 23 days' worth of current year budgeted expenditure). At 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013, the charity held £4,698 in free unrestricted reserves (equivalent to 19.5 days' worth of current year budgeted expenditure).

The forecast for 2013-14 shows a deficit of £15,884 (22% of turnover), comprising £18,384 on restricted funds, partially offset by a surplus of £2,500 on unrestricted funds. The organisation's total income for 2013-14 is expected to be £72,200, of which £63,950 (88.6%) has been confirmed as at 31<sup>st</sup> October 2013.

## **Officer's Appraisal**

Services addressing the consequences of dementia are timely given the Prime Minister's recent announcement to double the funding spent on

research into a possible cure for this disease. Despite the recognised value of WA's work with dementia patients, borough-wide commissioning changes have had a negative impact on the organisation's finances. The decision by the council to discontinue all arts funding across the borough resulted in the loss of core (unrestricted grant) and the need to trim all unrestricted expenditure, including that related to the charity's director.

With only one operational staff member remaining, the charity's management is currently being delivered by the volunteer trustees. They have identified future income opportunities through relationships with the local clinical commissioning group (CCG), and the potential to expand the Resonate service to the new tri-borough area of Westminster, Kensington & Chelsea, and Hammersmith & Fulham. A decision from the CCG is not, however, expected until the April 2014, and you therefore have the opportunity to play an important role providing 'bridging' finance alongside the other funders mentioned in section 18 of WA's application.

### **Recommendation**

**£72,000 over three years (£17,000; £25,000; £30,000) towards Westminster Arts' Resonate programme, on the condition that the balance of funding is raised.**